



Superintendent's Compendium

Listing of Designations, Closures, Permit Requirements and Other Restrictions Imposed Under Discretionary Authority.

Approved:


Cliff Spencer, Superintendent

8/7/2014
Date

In accordance with regulations and the delegated authority provided in Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations (36 CFR), Chapter 1, Parts 1-7, authorized by Title 16 United States Code, Section 3, the following regulatory provisions are established for the proper management, protection, government and public use of those portions of Mesa Verde National Park under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service. Unless otherwise stated, these regulatory provisions apply in addition to the requirements contained in 36 CFR, Chapter 1, Parts 1-7.

CFR Section 1.5 Closures and public use limits.

General:

1. **(a)(2)** The Superintendent may temporarily close park roadways, parking areas, facilities, waters, and all or portions of the park when such actions are deemed necessary to ensure public safety, protection of resources, or the avoidance of visitor use conflicts. The posting of signs, maps, media announcements, and the use of barricades and/or gates will identify such closures.

Consistent with applicable legislation and Federal administrative policies, the Superintendent has established the following rules, designations, conditions and restrictions on the following park activities.

2. **(a)(1)** Mesa Top Loop Road, Cedar Tree Tower, and Far View Group - The access roads to the Far View Group, Cedar Tree Tower, and Mesa Top Road are closed at sunset daily throughout the year. These sites in these areas are open for visitation between 8:00 a.m. and sunset.
3. **(a)(1)** Wetherill Mesa - Is open to the public during the dates and times as designated by the Superintendent.* Visitation at any other time of the year must be arranged through the Office of the Superintendent. Vehicles exceeding 25 feet in length and/or over 8,000 pounds GVW are prohibited. Due to the steep nature of the road, lack of shoulders, poor condition of the pavement, and storm drains which run parallel to the road, bicycles are prohibited.

4. **(a)(1)** Due to narrow winding roads and lack of adequate parking, trailers or towed vehicles are prohibited on all park roads beyond (south of) Morefield Campground.
5. **(a)(2)** Bicycles - Due to the steep nature of the road, lack of shoulders and narrowness of the pavement, limited sight distance, and heavy vehicular traffic, commercial bicycle tours or other organized bicycle groups with over 6 riders are prohibited on all park roads.
6. **(a)(1)** Badger House Loop Road - Public access to the Badger House Community is by tram or foot only. Visitation in this area is limited to those dates and times that Wetherill Mesa is open to the public. *Visitation at any other time of the year must be arranged through the Office of the Superintendent.
7. **(a)(3)(d)** Balcony House - Tours to Balcony House are limited to 50 visitors. Tour dates and times are designated by the Superintendent. * Tickets are required. Balcony House tours are restricted due to the size of the site and for protection of the resources.
8. **(a)(3)(d)** Cliff Palace - Tours to Cliff Palace are limited to 50 visitors. Tour dates and times are designated by the Superintendent. * Tickets are required. Cliff Palace tours are restricted for the protection of the resources.
9. **(a)(3)(d)** Long House – Tours to Long House are limited to 40 visitors. Tour dates and times are designated by the Superintendent.* Tickets are required. Long House tours are restricted for the protection of the resources and because of the limited capacity of the Wetherill Tram System.
10. **(a)(1)** Hiking is permitted only on the following designated trails: Prater Ridge Trail, Knife Edge Trail, Spruce Canyon Trail, Point Lookout Trail, Soda Canyon Overlook, Petroglyph Point Trail, and the Wetherill Badger House/Nordenskiold trails. Visitors using the Spruce Canyon and Petroglyph Point Trails must register at the trailhead.
11. **(a)(1)** All backcountry areas are closed to public use due to the high number of fragile archeological sites throughout the park.
12. **(a)(1)** Visiting of cliff dwellings is prohibited except when persons are accompanied by a park employee.
13. **(a)(1)** Visiting cliff dwellings and other archeological sites for scientific purposes is permitted without escort if approved by the Superintendent in writing; however, a backcountry or research permit and backcountry training is also required.
14. **(a)(1)** For public safety, due to a lack of lighting and no walkways, pedestrians are prohibited from using the main road tunnel (mile 5).

15. (a)(1) Employees may visit designated backcountry sites after obtaining a backcountry permit and under the conditions indicated on that permit. Designated sites will be determined by the Superintendent.
16. (a)(1) No food or drink, except plain water, may be consumed in any archeological site or cliff dwelling.
17. (a)(1) Visitors to the Visitor and Research Center may not go beyond the reception area without approval of the Chief of Research and Resource Management or the Park Curator. Visitors must be escorted at all times.
18. (a)(1) Visitors to the Research Library (located at the Visitor and Research Center) are not allowed in the historical book depository without approval of the Chief of Research and Resource Management or the Park Librarian. Visitors must be escorted at all times.
19. (a)(1) Government and private housing areas are closed to public access except for residents, guests of residents, or persons engaged in legitimate governmental activities or permitted business activities.
20. (a)(2) Commercial busses utilizing internal combustion engines must turn off their engines while parked. This restriction does not apply to vehicles loading and unloading or stopped on roadways in obedience to traffic control devices or orders, or as needed in response to legitimate traffic safety or operating concerns.
21. Launching, landing, or operation an unmanned aircraft from or on lands and waters administered by the National Park Service within the boundaries of Mesa Verde National Park is prohibited except as approved in writing by the superintendent. **36 CFR § 1.5 (a)(2)**

Definition: Unmanned Aircraft

The term “unmanned aircraft” means a device that is used or intended to be used for flight in the air without the possibility of direct human intervention from within or on the device, and the associated operational elements and components that are required for the pilot or system operator in command to operate or control the device (such as cameras, sensors, communication links). This term includes all types of devices that meet this definition (e.g. model airplanes, quadcopters, drones) that are used for any purpose, including for recreation or commerce.

The compendium closures required to implement this interim policy are necessary to maintain public health and safety in units of the National Park System and to protect park resources and values until the NPS can determine whether specific uses of unmanned aircraft on lands and waters administered by the NPS area appropriate and will not cause unacceptable impacts on the park resources and values. This closure by the superintendent implements Section 1.5 of NPS Management Policies 2006, which provides that a new form of park use may be allowed within a park only after a determination has been made in the

professional judgment of the superintendent that it will not result in unacceptable impacts on park resources and values. When proposed park uses and the protection of the park resources and values come into conflict, the protection of the resources and values must be predominant. Restricting the use of unmanned aircraft is paramount in protecting Mesa Verde's world renowned historic cultural resources and the public who visit them"

Section 2.1 Preservation of natural, cultural, and archeological resources.

(a)(4) Gathering wood in the park is prohibited.

Wood from fuel reduction projects may be made available to the public and park employees through a lottery.

(c)(1) The gathering of fruits, berries, and nuts by hand for personal use along road sides and trails open to the public is allowed for:

- pinyon nuts (up to 3 pounds)
- chokecherries (up to 4 pounds)
- small amounts of renewable vegetation, such as Indian Tobacco (up to 2 pounds)

Section 2.2 Wildlife protection.

(e) The viewing of wildlife with artificial light is prohibited in all portions of the park.

Section 2.10 Camping.

(a) Camping is permitted only in the Morefield Campground and only during dates designated by the Superintendent.* A 14-day camping limit is in effect. Camping permits are required. A limited number of group camping sites are available.

In Morefield Campground:

- No more than two tents per campsite are permitted and only if the site can accommodate them.
- No more than two vehicles per campsite are permitted, provided they can be parked at the site without obstructing traffic.
- No more than four motorcycles per campsite are permitted.
- No more than one vehicle/unit may hook up to utilities in a hookup site.
- Quiet hours are between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m.

(d) Food Storage:

To prevent wildlife from becoming habituated to non-native food or attracted to campgrounds and public areas, food and garbage must be disposed of properly or stored in vehicles or a camping unit that is constructed of solid, non-pliable material. Ice chests/food coolers are not appropriate food storage devices. This restriction does not apply to food that is being transported, consumed, or prepared for consumption.

Section 2.11 Picnicking

Picnic sites are designated on Mesa Top Road, Chapin Mesa, Wetherill Mesa, and in Morefield Campground.

Picnicking is permitted in Morefield Campground, for no charge, at vacant campsites, between the hours of 10 AM and 3 PM.

Picnicking is prohibited in backcountry areas of the park.

Section 2.13 Fires

(a) Fires are permitted only in grills provided by the park in Morefield Campground and Chapin Mesa picnic area. Park residents may have fire in approved fire pits or grills.

Section 2.15 Pets (This section does not apply to guide dogs accompanying visually impaired persons or hearing ear dogs accompanying hearing impaired persons.)

(a) The following is prohibited:

(1) Pets are prohibited on trails leading to Balcony House, Cliff Palace, Spruce Tree House, Step House, Long House, and the Badger House Community, and are prohibited in sites and cliff dwellings, and the Wetherill Mesa Tram.

Pets are prohibited in the park's backcountry including, but not limited to, the following: Petroglyph Point Trail, Spruce Canyon Trail, and trails outside the developed Morfield Campground area.

When the Mesa Top Road loops are closed due to snow, cross country skiing is permitted. Pets are prohibited on ski trails.

It is unlawful to leave a domestic animal unattended in a vehicle when the conditions in that vehicle would constitute a health hazard to the animal. Appropriate ventilation and water for the animal must be present during days that reach 65 degrees Fahrenheit or higher.

(2) Failing to cage, crate, restrain on a leash, which shall not exceed six feet in length, or otherwise under physical restrain a pet at all times.

(3) Leaving a pet unattended and/or tied to an object.

(4) Allowing a pet to make noise that is unreasonable considering location, time of day or night, impact on the park users, and other relevant factors, or that frightens wildlife by barking, howling, or making other noise.

(5) (e) Pets may be kept by residents in accordance with the Superintendent's Policies.

Section 2.16 Horses and pack animals

(g) The use of horses or pack animals in the park for private use or the keeping of horses in the campground is prohibited.

Section 2.18 Snowmobiles

Snowmobile operations/use is prohibited anywhere in the park except for administrative/emergency use.

Section 2.19 Winter activities.

(a) Skiing and snowshoeing will be allowed on the Cliff Palace and Morefield Campground loops and the Prater Canyon and Wetherill Road areas, once the roads are closed to traffic for winter and appropriate snow levels are present on the roads.

Section 2.20 Skating

Using roller skates, roller blades, skateboards, roller skis, coasting vehicles or similar devices is prohibited except in residential streets and driveways, by park residents or their guests.

Section 2.21 Smoking

Smoking is prohibited in all government facilities including the park's museum, visitor center and within cliff dwellings and archeological sites.

(a) The Superintendent may designate a portion of a park area as closed to smoking when necessary to protect park resources, reduce the risk of fire, or prevent conflicts among visitor use activities. Smoking in an area or location so designated is prohibited.

Section 2.35 Alcoholic beverages

(a)(3)(i) Consumption of alcoholic beverages in archeological sites and cliff dwellings is prohibited.

Section 2.36 Gambling

(a) The general prohibition against any form of gambling or the operation of gambling devices includes the prohibition against the sale of State of Colorado lottery tickets and maintaining or operating of coin operated electronic gambling devices that pay the winner additional turns.

Section 2.51 First Amendment Demonstrations

(e) All areas are designated as open to public demonstrations that involve 25 or fewer persons without a permit. Demonstrations involving 26 or more individuals must have a permit issued by the Superintendent and designated to specific demonstration sites.

Designated Demonstration Sites:

- Chapin Mesa Amphitheater
- Farview: Farview Terrace Parking Lot
- Morefield Campground Amphitheater: Entrance to Campground Amphitheater Trail.
- Visitor and Research Center: Entrance to Welcome Plaza nearest the Handicap Parking Area.

More information can be obtained from the park's Special Use Permit Coordinator.

Section 2.52 Designated areas for sale and distribution of printed matter for First Amendment purposes

(e) The following areas are designated as open to the sale or distribution of printed matter. Printed matter is limited to message-bearing textual printed material such as books, pamphlets, magazines, and leaflets, provided that it is not solely commercial advertising.

Designated Demonstration Sites:

- Chapin Mesa Amphitheater
- Farview: Farview Terrace Parking Lot
- Morefield Campground Amphitheater: Entrance to Campground Amphitheater Trail.

- Visitor and Research Center: Entrance to Welcome Plaza nearest the Handicap Parking Area.

Superintendent's will allow free distribution of message-bearing items to the public. Examples of message-bearing items that may be distributed for free include CDs, DVDs and other readable electronic media. Such items must be distributed free of charge and individuals may not ask or demand payment or request a donation in exchange for the item.

Designated Demonstration Sites:

- Chapin Mesa Amphitheater
- Farview: Farview Terrace Parking Lot
- Morefield Campground Amphitheater: Entrance to Campground Amphitheater Trail.
- Visitor and Research Center: Entrance to Welcome Plaza nearest the Handicap Parking Area.

Section 2.62 Memorialization

The scattering of human ashes is not allowed in Mesa Verde National Park due to sensitive cultural concerns with archeological site

*These schedules shall be publicized in accordance with 36 CFR § 1.7 Public Notices.